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FROM WALT ROCTOW  
TO THE PRESIDENT  
INFO: GEORGE CHRISTIAN  
CITE CAP-2320

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HEREWITH LATEST ASSESSMENT OF THE EAST EUROPEAN  
SITUATION (AS OF 6:30 AM EDT)

31 AUGUST 1968

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1. THE PRE-INVASION CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY MET THIS MORNING TO DISCUSS ITS OWN COMPOSITION AND THE "PERSONNEL CRISIS" IN THE PARTY PRESIDIUM AND SECRETARIAT. RADIO CZECHOSLOVAKIA INDICATED THAT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WOULD ALSO REVIEW THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SLOVAK REPRESENTATIVE ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WHICH HAVE ARisen AS A RESULT OF THE RECENT OCTOBER CONGRESS.

2. CZECHOSLOVAK INTERIOR MINISTER JOSEF PAVEL RESIGNED, ACCORDING TO AN AUSTRIAN WIRE REPORT. "HELL INFORMED PRAGUE QUARTERS" THE BROADCAST STATED THAT JAN PELNAR, SECRETARY OF THE WEST CZECHIA PARTY COMMITTEE, WILL REPLACE HIM. PELNAR, WHO HAD BEEN CONSIDERED A NOVOTNY MAN UNTIL THE LATTER'S FALL FROM POWER, ALLEGEDLY JOINED THE DUBcek GROUP LAST APRIL. A RELIABLE EMBASSY PRAGUE SOURCE ATTRIBUTES PAVEL'S CUSTER TO HIS OPPOSITION TO ANY NEW WAVE OF ARRESTS.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER JIRI HAJEK DEPARTED VIENNA FOR ZURICH EARLY TODAY, AND "INFORMED SOURCES" IN VIENNA DOUBTED IF HE WOULD RETURN TO PRAGUE SOON. HAJEK IS PRESUMABLY AMONG THOSE ON MOSCOW'S BLACKLIST.

4. THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUSHED BACK THE BRNO INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR ONE WEEK, AND THE FAIR IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR 14-24 SEPTEMBER. CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS ARE PRESENTLY TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO HOLD OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WHICH WERE SCHEDULED PRIOR TO THE OCCUPATION.

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5. THERE IS TENOUS EVIDENCE THAT ELEMENTS OF THE SOVIET 11TH ARMY WHICH RECENTLY MOVED INTO CENTRAL EAST GERMANY AND NORTHWESTERN CZECHOSLOVAKIA FROM THE BALTIC AREA WILL REMAIN IN THE FORWARD AREA INDEFINITELY. ON 29 AUGUST A [REDACTED] AT A FIELD HEADQUARTERS OF THE SOVIET 1ST GUARDS TANK ARMY IN WESTERN CZECHOSLOVAKIA REFERRED TO THE 11TH ARMY AS "REMAINING HERE OR ELSE IN EAST GERMANY."

6. THE SOVIETS ARE BRINGING AIR SURVEILLANCE RADAR AND REPORTING EQUIPMENT INTO CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THEY PROBABLY NEED THIS EQUIPMENT TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LOSS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK AIR DEFENSE REPORTING NETWORK, WHICH HAS BEEN SILENT SINCE THE SOVIET INTERVENTION.

7. THERE IS LITTLE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE RUMANIAN SITUATION SUBSEQUENT TO THIS MORNING'S MEMORANDUM: POSSIBLE SOVIET MILITARY THREAT TO RUMANIA.

8. THE SOVIET AIR FORCE'S METEOROLOGICAL NETWORK HAS BEEN BROADCASTING WEATHER CONDITIONS IN RUMANIA AND YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 28 AUGUST, SUGGESTING THAT FLIGHTS INTO THE BALKA'S ARE ANTICIPATED. THE SOVIETS COULD ALSO USE THIS INFORMATION FOR FORECASTING IN THE USSR, HOWEVER, FLIGHTS REPORTING FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY.

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